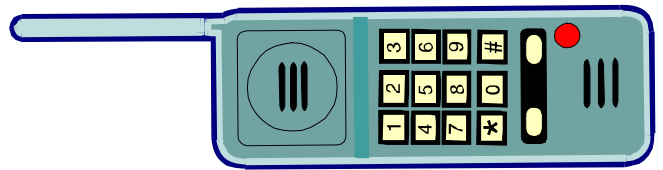




911



Simulator Helps Prepare Youngsters for 9-1-1 Emergencies

Twelve-year old Joey Hrenchir and his brother, John, age eight, of Hoyt, Ks. know how important it is to learn what to do in an emergency.

In December of last year, Joey and John were able to summon aid for their father who needed emergency medical assistance. Both boys had received 9-1-1 Simulator training at the local fire department's open house.

In an effort to make sure more Kansas kids are ready for an emergency, the Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition is making available an interactive 9-1-1 simulator to help teach Kansas kids how to use and not abuse the national 9-1-1 emergency response systems.

"The interactive simulator provides the opportunity for children to prepare for real life situations by allowing them to practice calling 9-1-1," said Jan Stegelman, coalition coordinator. "It also helps teach kids about the importance of our 9-1-1 system and the dangers of misusing it."

Simulator operators can also verify that a child has memorized his or her name and address. The simulator can be used in a classroom setting or at health fairs, fire department open houses and other public safety events.

A microprocessor with voice storage technology recreates the interactive dialogue that a child would encounter during an emergency call. To serve the growing Spanish-speaking population in Kansas, the model purchased by SAFE KIDS is bilingual.

As the child calls on the attached phone, a large LED display shows the numbers and a hand control is used to play the recorded responses a child would hear from an actual 9-1-1 emergency operator. Easy operation and a short training video allow an instructor with a minimal background and education in emergency services to effectively conduct a 9-1-1 safety lesson.

State Farm Insurance has four simulators in Kansas which are available for use around the state when a program is scheduled in conjunction with a State Farm agent or associate. State Farm provided simulators used by the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office and the Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition at the Kansas State Fair last year, where it is estimated that over 2,000 children were trained.

The addition of another 9-1-1 simulator in the state will increase the opportunities for Kansas children to practice their emergency response skills.

The Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition Interactive 9-1-1 Simulator will be available for use by Local SAFE KIDS coalitions and chapters, fire departments, EMS providers, law enforcement agencies and other community groups throughout the state. To reserve the unit or for more information, contact **Elena Nuss** or **Rosie Williams** at 785-296-3401 or by Email: nusse@ksfm.state.ks.us.



Columbus Daily Advocate June 19, 2002